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SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON ENHANCING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PRINCIPLE OF NON-USE OF FORCE IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 1st MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Monday, 21 August 1978, at 3 p.m.

Temporary Chairman: Mr. SYTENKO (Representative of the Secretary-General)

Chairman: Mr. CUEVAS CANCINO (Mexico)

CONTENTS

Opening of the session

Election of officers

Adoption of the agenda

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The meeting was called to order at 3.45 p.m.

OPENING OF THE SESSION

1. The TEMPORARY CHAIRMAN recalled that, in establishing the Special Committee by its resolution 32/150, the General Assembly had considered that, in conformity with the United Nations Charter, States should refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State, or in any other manner inconsistent with the purposes of the United Nations, and had reaffirmed the need for universal and effective application of that principle in international relations.

2. The mandate of the Special Committee and its work had a direct bearing on the determination of the peoples of the United Nations to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, as proclaimed in the United Nations Charter, on mankind's quest for the consolidation of peace and the strengthening of international security, on the extension of the process of relaxation of tensions to all regions of the world and on the deepening and consolidation of international détente.

3. In its resolution, the General Assembly had also reaffirmed the need not only for universal and effective application of the principle of non-use of force but also for assistance by the United Nations in that endeavour. Although the record of such assistance by the United Nations went back to the days of the inauguration of the Organization, a new and important development towards universal and effective application of the principle of non-use of force had been gaining momentum in the course of the past two years. He referred, in that connexion, to General Assembly resolution 31/9 and to the report of the Secretary-General (A/32/181 and Add.1) containing the views and suggestions of Member States on the conclusion of a world treaty on non-use of force in international relations.

4. The current session of the Special Committee was a logical move towards the conclusion of such a treaty. Being under an obligation to report to the General Assembly on its work, the Special Committee had a special responsibility to achieve meaningful, positive and constructive results which would enable the Assembly to make substantial progress towards the goals set forth in its decisions.

The meeting was suspended at 3.50 p.m. and resumed at 5.15 p.m.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

5. Mr. Cuevas Cancino (Mexico) was elected Chairman by acclamation.

6. Mr. Cuevas Cancino (Mexico) took the Chair.

7. The CHAIRMAN said that many of the circumstances obtaining at the inception of the United Nations had changed. In the area of the non-use of force in international relations, those changes were reflected in a number of international

(The Chairman)

instruments. The prohibition of the use of force had always been one of the prime concerns of nations. In Latin America, for example, many efforts had been made in that direction since the attainment of independence.

8. He expressed the hope that the Special Committee would approach its task with an open mind and accord to it the importance it deserved.

9. Mr. Jacovides (Cyprus), Mr. Kodjovi (Togo) and Mr. Kostov (Bulgaria) were elected Vice-Chairmen by acclamation.

10. Mr. Duchene (Belgium) was elected Rapporteur by acclamation.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

11. The agenda was adopted.

The meeting rose at 5.45 p.m.